



August 14, 2024

Dear Governor Kelly and Lieutenant Governor Toland,

I am writing on behalf of the citizens of Peabody, Kansas who I have a sworn duty to represent, to ask for your attention and assistance with a very important matter. The Peabody Mainstreet Association (PMSA) received a \$1.5 million award as part of BASE 2.0 in 2023. The grant project focuses on the rehabilitation of our historic district and is pivotal in revitalizing our downtown. The improvements allow for new business growth and the retention of current business.

Peabody had what seemed to be the best possible partner in the process, Jonathan Clayton, who was the Director of Economic Recovery for the Department of Commerce. Jonathan served a pivotal role in helping PMSA facilitate the administration of the BASE grant. He provided guidance on every step to ensure PMSA remained in compliance with the grant requirements. Jonathan also served as the point of contact for project documentation as the grant administrator and assisted PMSA with the submission of all required documents to Commerce.

Peabody Main Street Association anticipated the second disbursement of base grant funds in late January or early February 2024. There were delays in the disbursement due to the Department of Commerce requests for additional information. PMSA was of the understanding that Jonathan continued to answer all requests and submit the documents requested according to their communication with him.

As mayor, I worked closely with the PMSA board and the engineer to coordinate the city's water line upgrades in the downtown district with the scope of work for BASE Grant funds to replace sidewalks and make additional streetscape upgrades. The entire Peabody community looks forward to these visible improvements to our downtown. I learned that PMSA had been contacted by Amber Cabrera about terminating the BASE 2.0 Grant with Peabody Main Street Association and offered any assistance I could provide.

On Saturday, August 3 Jonathan was expected at a PMSA meeting. When he didn't arrive, board members reached out to me to see if I had heard from him. I assisted in trying to obtain his itinerary for the day and his last known location, as well as alerting our Police Chief to the situation. As you can imagine, Jonathan's disappearance has sent shock waves through our community and has created further disruption in PMSA's ability to provide necessary grant documentation to Commerce.



I implore you to intervene for the residents of Peabody on behalf of PMSA and direct the Department of Commerce to grant PMSA additional time to fulfill grant documentation for 2023. The PMSA board is now aware that the documentation requirements had not been fulfilled by Jonathan, but I can attest they are working tirelessly to return to compliance. They simply need a little more time in this tragic and startling situation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Catherine A. Weems". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Catherine Weems, Mayor

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